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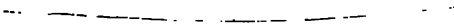






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LINCOLN



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Lincoln," by John G. Nicolay and John



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LINCOLN

**PASSAGES FROM HIS
SPEECHES AND LETTERS**

**WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
RICHARD WATSON GILDER**



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INTRODUCTION

OF style, in the ordinary use of the word, Lincoln may be said to have had little. He certainly did not strive for an artistic method of expression through such imitation of the masters, for instance, as Robert Louis Stevenson's. There was nothing ambitiously elaborate or self-consciously simple in Lincoln's way of writing. He had not the scholar's range of words. He was not always grammatically accurate. He would doubtless have been very much surprised if any one had told him that he had a "style" at all. And yet, because he was determined to be understood, because he was honest, be-

native good taste, as well as a strain of imagination, he achieved a singularly clear and forcible style, which took color from his own noble character, and became a thing individual and distinguished.

He was, indeed, extremely modest about his accomplishments. His great desire was to convince those whom he addressed, and he could do this,—if he could make his views clear to them, still more if he could make them appear reasonable,—he was satisfied. In one of his speeches



prepared. I admit that it was. I am not a master of language; I have not a fine education; I am not capable of entering into a disquisition upon dialectics, as I believe you call it; but I do not believe the language I employed bears any such construction as Judge Douglas puts upon it. But I don't care about a quibble in regard to words. I know what I meant, and I will not leave this crowd in doubt, if I can explain it to them, what I really meant in the use of that paragraph."

. Who are, to Americans at least, the two most interesting men of action of the nineteenth century? Why not Napoleon and Lincoln? No two men could have been more radically different in many ways; but they were both great rulers, one according to the "good old plan"

teresting personalities ; both moved by imagination ; and both acquired remarkable power of expression. One used this power to carry out his own sometimes selfish, sometimes selfish, purposes to dominate and to deceive ; the other for the expression of truth and the persuasion of his fellow men.

Napoleon's literary art consisted in the making of phrases which pierced like a Corsican knife, tingled the blood like the sound of a trumpet. His words were their mark quick as a stroke.


ent; heroic, appealing, gracious or humorous, it does not so much startle as melt the heart. These men were alike in this—that they learned to express themselves by dint of long practice, and both in youth wrote much nonsense. Napoleon in his young days wrote romance and history; Lincoln wrote verse and composed speeches. Napoleon failed as a literary man; Lincoln certainly did not make any great success as a lyceum lecturer; in fact, his style was at its best only when his whole heart was enlisted.

Lincoln's style, at its best, is characterized by great simplicity and directness, which in themselves are artistic qualities. In addition there is an agreeable cadence, not overdone except in one curious instance,—a passage of the Second Inaugural,—where

Fondly do we
pray—
That this mighty scourge of v
speedily pass away.

This does not spoil, but it
what injures, one of the
memorable of his writings

Then there is in Lin
quaintness, a homeline
humor of illustration, and
a most engaging frank
intellectual honesty. T
has both an intellectual
satisfaction in the clear
fairness of the state
effects agreeably



art of stating clearly the actual reality. There was nothing of invention in Lincoln's imagination; his was the imagination that is implied in a strong realization of the truth of things in the mind of the writer or speaker.

When these letters and speeches of Lincoln were appearing in the papers as part of the news of the day, I wonder how many of us who were then living appreciated them from the literary point of view. I remember that at a certain period, some time after the war, I seemed for the first time to awake fully to the attraction of Lincoln's style. Beginning with the famous and familiar speech at Gettysburg, I reread many of his writings, and felt everywhere his genius for expression.

Where and how did Lincoln

did not know—
was never in a college or ac
a student. . . . What he l
way of education he has f
After he was twenty-thre
separated from his father,
English grammar—impe
course, but so as to spea
as well as he now does.
and nearly mastered the
> { Euclid since he was a me
gress. He regrets his
cation and does what he
the want.


As a boy at home we
he would write, and
on the v

book he could find, and could spell down the whole country." He read early the Bible, Æsop's "Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pilgrim's Progress," a history of the United States, Weems's "Life of Washington," Franklin's "Autobiography"; later, the life of Clay and the works of Burns and Shakspeare. Not a bad list of books if taken seriously and not mixed with trash; for, of course, culture has to do not so much with the extent of the information as with the depth of the impression.

The youthful Lincoln pondered also over the Revised Statutes of Indiana; and "he would sit in the twilight and read a dictionary as long as he could see." John Hanks said: "When Abe and I returned to the house from work he would go to the

twenty-four, when he was posed to be keeping a s Nicolay and Hay speak of "grotesque youth, habited homespun tow, lying on his b with his feet on the trunk of tree, and poring over his book the hour, grinding around the shade as it shifted from n to east."

The youth not only read thought, but wrote, among things, nonsensical verses; he composed speeches. He early into politics, and soon came a thoughtful and eff




Experiments" printed since the "Life" was issued, "though the vocabulary was scanty, the words were short and forcible." He learned among men and women poor and inured to hardship how the plain people think and feel.

In his young manhood at Springfield he measured wits with other bright young lawyers, in plain and direct language before plain and simple-minded auditors, either in political discussion or in the court-room; either in the capital or in the country towns of Illinois. His mathematical and legal studies were an aid to precise statement, and his native honesty made him frank and convincing in argument. He felt himself to be a poor defender of a guilty client, and sometimes shirked the job.

resembling the speaker
of oratory, he was quick, a
lay declares, to realize the
goal and overcome the obsta-
cle. His secretary relates
in his later years he used
often with glee the descrip-
tion of the Southwestern orator on
it is said: "He mounted
the pulpit, threw back his head
and his eyes, and left the
consequences to God."


By practice in extem-
poral speaking Lincoln learned
the most difficult thing—
to produce literature on the spot.



ing the orator's temptation to please and captivate by extravagant and false sentiment and statement. The writer, and particularly the political writer, is tempted to this sort of immorality, but still more the speaker, for with the latter the reward of applause is prompt and seductive. It is amazing to look over Lincoln's record and find how seldom he went beyond bounds, how fair and just he was, how responsible and conscientious his utterances long before these utterances became of national importance. Yet it was largely because of this very quality that they assumed national importance. And then both his imagination and his sympathy helped him here, for while he saw and keenly felt his own side of the argument, he could see as clearly, and he could sym-

the legislature, he issued a formal address to the people of Salmon County. It is the first preserved by Nicolay and Hays in their collection of his addresses and letters. Nicolay well says that "as a literary production of an ordinary college graduate we need to be ashamed of it."

In this address we already find that honest purpose, that "straightforwardness" and persuasiveness of speech, which is characteristic of his later and more celebrated utterances. In his gathered writings and addresses



thirty-third year occur some of the most surprising proofs of the delicacy of his nature—of that culture of the soul which had taken place in him in the midst of such harsh and unpromising environment. Reference is made to the letters written to his young friend Joshua F. Speed, a member of the Kentucky family associated by marriage with the family of the poet Keats.

In Lincoln's early serious verse the feeling is right, though the art is lacking; but the verses are interesting in that they show a good ear. Note has been made of a pleasing cadence in Lincoln's prose; and it is not strange that he should show a rhythmical sense in his verse. He showed a good deal of common sense in not going on with

friendship.

We come now to Lincoln the accomplished orator. His speech in Congress on the 12th of January, 1848, on the Mexican War, strikes the note of solemnity and of noble indignation which a little later rang through the country and, with other voices, aroused it to a sense of impending danger.

It was in 1851 that he showed in some family letters that not only show him in a charming light but the true and wise friend and the selfless stepbrother, but the

phrase and pure reason of these epistles.

DEAR BROTHER: When I came into Charleston day before yesterday, I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since, and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year; and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money, and spend it. Part with the land you

we find in his Peoria speech of 1854 a statement of his long contention against the extension of slavery, and a proof of his ability to cope intellectually with the ablest debaters of the West.

His Peoria speech was in answer to Judge Douglas, with whom four years afterward he held the famous debate. Lincoln was then forty-five years old, and his victory contains that moral impetus which was to give it greater and greater power.

In 1856 occurred the Fremont and Dayton campaign, which

phrase: "All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, nothing but folly. *We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not.*" In his famous speech delivered at Springfield, Illinois, at the close of the Republican State Convention of 1858,—in which he had been named as candidate for United States senator,—the skilful and serious orator rises not merely to the broad level of nationality, but to the plane of universal humanity. As events thicken and threaten, his style becomes more solemn. So telling at last his power of phrase that it would hardly seem to be an exaggeration to declare that the war itself was partly induced by the fact that Abraham Lincoln was able to express his pregnant thoughts with the art of a master. How



"A house divided
cannot stand." I believe this
government cannot endure permanently
half slave and half free. I do not
expect the Union to be dissolved.
I do not expect the house to fall.
I do expect it will cease to be divided.

The cadence of Lincoln's
speech with its burden of high
thoughts touched with that heroism
is so near to pathos, reminding
of the *Leitmotif*, the "leading
motive" in symphonic
music-drama of which he
made use, and which is
typically characteristic of


sistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. *We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.*

We have arrived now at the period of the joint debate between Lincoln and Douglas. In Lincoln we have the able and practised attorney, with one side of his nature open to the eternal; in Douglas the skilful lawyer, adroit and ambitious, not easily

Lincoln, &c.

right and patriotic ac-
the depths of his nat
stirred.

One of the most char-
qualities of Lincoln's e
is its morality, its insigh
phesy ; and in the now fa-
bate he reached well-
fullness of his power to
thoughts into fitting
Straight his words we
minds and hearts
listening crowds. T
he contended, was as
or the wrong of slave




struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings.

A recent biographer of Lincoln, Mr. John T. Morse, Jr., says that “it is just appreciation, not extravagance, to say that the cheap and miserable little volume, now out of print, containing in bad newspaper type ‘The Lincoln and Douglas Debates,’ holds some of the masterpieces of oratory of all ages and nations.”

It is interesting to recall the fact that, in the pause of his affairs after the debate with Douglas, Lincoln took up the then popular custom of lyceum-lecturing. In the very year before

eries, Inventions, and Im
ments" in towns near S
field, and in Springfield it
Washington's Birthday i
fateful year of 1860. The
little in this lecture to attr
slightest attention; and w
may have given satis
among neighbors, it could
have added to his fame
when he had the opportu
an engagement to lecture
litical subjects in this same
of February, he made what
known as the "great addr
Cooper Union. Soon aft



resumed his true literary career, for his style was at its best only when he was dealing with a cause in which his whole heart was enlisted.

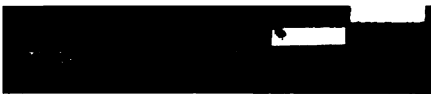
By way of contrast to what has passed and is to come, let us cull some of the passages in which shone Lincoln's wit and humor. How pleasing it is to know that his melancholy nature, his burdened spirit, were refreshed with glimpses—often storms—of mirth! They say that to see Lincoln laugh was an amazing sight.

The humor of which we learn so much from those who heard him tell his quaint and often Rabelaisian stories came out sharply and roughly in one of his congressional speeches, in which he referred with grim sarcasm to General Cass's military record

not be read

eagle." "If you think
slander a woman into lov
or a man into voting for
it till you are satisfied."


"Has Douglas the exclus
in this country to be on
of all questions?" Aga
his numerous speeches n
made in Illinois, Senator
regularly argues against
trine of the equality of
while he does not draw
clusion that the superi
to enslave the inferior
dently wishes his hearer



the President once, in a letter to General Hooker, "in intrenchments, and have you at a disadvantage, and so, man for man, worst you at that point, while his main force would in some way be getting an advantage of you northward. In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other." It was also to Hooker that he wrote: "Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship."

In a letter written in 1859 to a Boston committee he said, in describing a change in party standards: "I remember being once

their harmless contest, each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other. If the two leading parties of this day are really identical with the two in the contest of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as two drunken men." And in 1845, from his very last public address, he said: "Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to be justified if it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it."




that patriots so often shoot at the President as they plunge past him in the processions through the White House,—“I believe in God Almighty and Abraham Lincoln.” “You ’re more than half right,” quickly answered the President. When, at a conference with Confederate leaders, he was reminded by the Southern commissioner, Mr. Hunter, that Charles I entered into an agreement with “parties in arms against the government,” Lincoln said: “I do not profess to be posted in history. In all such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about the case of Charles I is that he lost his head.”

Lincoln was elected to the Presidency of a country on the verge of civil war. In his farewell to

poem. Remember the p
quoted before. It occurred
speech of 1858: "The re
not doubtful. We shall r
—if we stand firm, we sh
fail. Wise counsels may
erate or mistakes delay i
sooner or later, the victory
to come."

In parting from his old
bors he said :

Here my children have bee
and one is buried. I now lea
knowing when or whether eve
return, with a task before me
than that which rested upon




him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.

The First Inaugural concludes with a passage of great tenderness. We learn from Nicolay and Hay that the suggestion of that passage, its first draft indeed, came from Seward. But compare this first draft with the passage as amended and adopted by Lincoln ! This is Seward's :

I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battle-fields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again

I am loath to close. We are
enemies, but friends. We must
be enemies. Though passion may
have strained, it must not break
bonds of affection. The my-
chords of memory, stretching fr
every battle-field and patriot gr
to every living heart and hearthst
all over this broad land, will yet s
the chorus of the Union when a
touched, as surely they will be
the better angels of our nature.

There is in this last someth
that suggests music; again
hear the strain of the Leitm
strongly enough. in 1858




Seward. He was speaking of the moral sentiment, the sentiment of equality, in the Declaration of Independence. "*That*," he said, "is the electric chord in that Declaration, that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world."

In the final paragraph of the Second Inaugural we find again the haunting music with which the First Inaugural closed. On the heart of what American—North or South—are not the words imprinted?

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who

As the great musician
somewhere to its highest
sion the motive which h
entwined from first to la
music-drama, so did the
sion of Lincoln's passion
country reach its culmi
the tender and majestic
of the Gettysburg Addr

In a larger sense, w
dedicate—we cannot co
we cannot hallow—this
The brave men, living
who struggled here, h
crated it far above our f



the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.


But there is a letter of Lincoln's which may well be associated with the Gettysburg Address. It was written, just one year after the delivery of the Address, to a mother who, the President heard, had lost five sons in the army. I believe the

WASHINGTON,

November 21,

MRS. BIXBY, Boston, Massac

DEAR MADAM: I hav
shown in the files of the V
partment a statement of the A
General of Massachusetts th
are the mother of five sons w
died gloriously on the field o
I feel how weak and fruitless
be any words of mine which
attempt to beguile you from
grief of a loss so overwhelming
But I cannot refrain from telling
to you the consolation that
found in the thanks of the F
they died to save. I pray that
heavenly Father may soon



laid so costly a sacrifice upon the
altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely
and respectfully,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This letter of consolation in its simplicity and fitness again recalls the Greek spirit. It is like one of those calm monuments of grief which the traveler may still behold in that small cemetery under the deep Athenian sky, where those who have been dead so many centuries are kept alive in the memories of men by an art which is immortal.



LINCOLN



LINCOLN

I

LINCOLN'S AMBITION

From an address to the people of Sangamon
County, issued March 9, 1832.

EVERY man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young, and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular re-

ferred a favor upon
which I shall be unren
my labors to compens
if the good people in
dom shall see fit to ke
the background, I ha
too familiar with di
ments to be very m
grined.



II

TO A FRIEND

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed, dated
February 3, 1842.


You well know that I do not feel my own sorrows much more keenly than I do yours, when I know of them ; and yet I assure you I was not much hurt by what you wrote me of your excessively bad feeling at the time you wrote.

Not that I am less capable of sympathizing with you now than ever, not that I am less your friend than ever, but because I hope and believe that your present anxiety and distress about her health and her life must and will forever ban-

101

forever be removed, most feel a presentiment the Almighty has so present affliction expect (that object), surely not come in their stead to immeasurable measure.

The death-scenes we love are surely enough; but these compared for and expected they happen to all know they must happen as they are, they unlooked-for sorrow she, as you fear, be



venture you now prize most highly. But I hope your melancholy bodings as to her early death are not well founded. I even hope that ere this reaches you she will have returned with improved and still improving health, and that you will have met her, and forgotten the sorrows of the past in the enjoyments of the present.

I would say more if I could, but it seems that I have said enough. It really appears to me that you yourself ought to rejoice, and not sorrow, at this indubitable evidence of your undying affection for her. Why, Speed, if you did not love her, although you might not wish her death, you would most certainly be resigned to it. Perhaps this point is no longer a question with you, and my pertinacious dwelling upon it is a rude intrusion upon





III


ADVICE TO YOUNG LAWYERS

Notes for a law lecture, written about
July 1, 1850.

I AM not an accomplished lawyer. I find quite as much material for a lecture in those points wherein I have failed as in those wherein I have been moderately successful.

The leading rule for the lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for to-morrow which can be done to-day. Never let your correspondence fall behind. Whatever piece of business you have in hand, before stopping, do all the labor pertaining to it which can

..
If a law point
examine the books, &
the authority you rely
the declaration itself, w
are sure to find it wher
The same of defenses &
In business not likely
gated,—ordinary
cases, foreclosures, j
and the like,—make
inations of titles, and
and even draft orde
crees in advance. 7
has a triple adv
avoids omissions a
saves your labor
done, performs the
hen you l




vated. It is the lawyer's avenue to the public. However able and faithful he may be in other respects, people are slow to bring him business if he cannot make a speech. And yet there is not a more fatal error to young lawyers than relying too much on speech-making. If any one, upon his rare powers of speaking, shall claim an exemption from the drudgery of the law, his case is a failure in advance.

Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser—in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough.

Never stir up litigation. A

search of detects a
whereon to stir up st
put money in his poc
moral tone ought to b
into the profession
should drive such me
it.

The matter of fees
tant, far beyond the r
tion of bread and l
volved. Properly att
fuller justice is don
lawyer and client.
bitant fee should
claimed. As a ger
never take your wh
advance, nor any m
W



the case as if something was still in prospect for you, as well as for your client. And when you lack interest in the case the job will very likely lack skill and diligence in the performance. Settle the amount of fee and take a note in advance. Then you will feel that you are working for something, and you are sure to do your work faithfully and well. Never sell a fee-note—at least not before the consideration service is performed. It leads to negligence and dishonesty—negligence by losing interest in the case, and dishonesty in refusing to refund when you have allowed the consideration to fail.

There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. I say vague, because when we consider to what extent confidence and

that then
honesty is very distinct
vivid. Yet the impression
common, almost universal
Let no young man choose
the law for a calling for a
moment yield to the popular
lief. Resolve to be honest
all events; and if in your
judgment you cannot be
honest lawyer, resolve to
honest without being a lawyer
Choose some other occupation
rather than one in the
ing of which you do,
vance, consent to be a



IV

SLAVERY

A fragment, written about July 1, 1854.

EQUALITY in society alike beats inequality, whether the latter be of the British aristocratic sort or of the domestic slavery sort.

We know Southern men declare that their slaves are better off than hired laborers amongst us. How little they know whereof they speak! There is no permanent class of hired laborers amongst us. Twenty-five years ago I was a hired laborer. The hired laborer of yesterday labors on his own account to-day, and will hire others to labor for him to-morrow.

OF SOME TO SHUT THEM
the burden onto the shoulders
of others is the great curse
of the race. Originally
a curse for transgression
of the whole race, when, as
slavery, it is concentrated
on a part only, it becomes
a double-refined curse of
God upon his creatures.

Free labor has the incentive
of hope; pure slavery has
no hope. The power of
God upon human exertion and
endurance is wonderful.
The slave-master himself has
no conception of it, and hence
his system of tasks among :



a day, if you will task him to break a hundred, and promise him pay for all he does over, he will break you a hundred and fifty. You have substituted hope for the rod.

And yet perhaps it does not occur to you that, to the extent of your gain in the case, you have given up the slave system and adopted the free system of labor.

V

SLAVERY

A fragment, of the same date as the preceding

If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may of right enslave B, why may not B snatch the same argument to prove equally that he may enslave A? You say A is black and B is black. It is then; the lighter having no right to enslave the darker. Take care. By this argument you are now making the case of the negro man as good as the case of the white man. By this argument you are now making the case of the white man as good as the case of the negro man. By this argument you are now making the case of the white man as good as the case of the negro man. By this argument you are now making the case of the white man as good as the case of the negro man.



have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule you are to be slave to the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own.


But, say you, it is a question of interest, and if you make it your interest you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest he has the right to enslave you.

THE REAL SOUTHERN VII
OF SLAVERY

From a speech delivered at Peoria, Ill
October 16, 1854, in reply to Senator Doi

EQUAL justice to the Sout
is said, requires us to con
to the extension of slaver
new countries. That is to
inasmuch as you do not o'
to my taking my hog to
braska, therefore I must
object to you taking
slave.

Now, I admit that t
perfectly logical, if there
between hog




ther you of the South yourselves have ever been willing to do as much. It is kindly provided that of all those who come into the world only a small percentage are natural tyrants. That percentage is no larger in the slave States than in the free. The great majority South, as well as North, have human sympathies, of which they can no more divest themselves than they can of their sensibility to physical pain. These sympathies in the bosoms of the Southern people manifest, in many ways, their sense of the wrong of slavery, and their consciousness that, after all, there is humanity in the negro.

If they deny this, let me address them a few plain questions. In 1820 you joined the North, almost unanimously, in declaring the African slave-trade piracy, and in annexing

that men . . .
The practice was no more t
bringing wild negroes fr
Africa to such as would l
them. But you never thou
of hanging men for catch
and selling wild horses, v
buffaloes, or wild bears.


Again, you have among
a sneaking individual of
class of native tyrants kn
as the "Slave-Dealer."
watches your necessities,
crawls up to buy your sla
a speculating price. If
cannot help it, you sell to
but if you can help it,
drive him from your



play with his ; they may rollick freely with the little negroes, but not with the slave-dealer's children. If you are obliged to deal with him, you try to get through the job without so much as touching him. It is common with you to join hands with the men you meet, but with the slave-dealer you avoid the ceremony — instinctively shrinking from the snaky contact. If he grows rich and retires from business, you still remember him, and still keep up the ban of non-intercourse upon him and his family. Now why is this? You do not so treat the man who deals in corn, cotton, or tobacco.

And yet again. There are in the United States and Territories, including the District of Columbia, 433,643 free blacks. At five hundred dollars per head they are worth

we do not see free
free cattle running
How is this? All
blacks are the desc
slaves, or have be
themselves; and the
slaves now but for
which has operated
white owners, indu
at vast pecuniary s
liberate them. Wh
something? Is ther
taking it? In all t
it is your sense of j
human sympathy c
telling you that the
has some natural rig
self that these are




to deny the humanity of the
slave, and estimate him as only
the equal of the hog? Why ask
us to do what you will not do
yourselves? Why ask us to do
for nothing what two hundred
millions of dollars could not
induce you to do?

•

THE RIGHT OF S GOVERNMENT

From a speech delivered at Pe
October 16, 1854, in reply to Sen

BUT one great argu
support of the repe
Missouri Compromis
come. That argum
sacred right of s
ment." It seems
guished senator has
difficulty in getting
onists, even in the
meet him fairly o
Some doe'




tion, I meet that argument—I rush in—I take that bull by the horns. I trust I understand and truly estimate the right of self-government. My faith in the proposition that each man should do precisely as he pleases with all which is exclusively his own lies at the foundation of the sense of justice there is in me.

I extend the principle to communities of men as well as to individuals. I so extend it because it is politically wise as well as naturally just: politically wise in saving us from broils about matters which do not concern us. Here, or at Washington, I would not trouble myself with the oyster laws of Virginia, or the cranberry laws of Indiana.

The doctrine of self-government is right,—absolutely and eternally right,—but it has no

whether a negro is a
man. If he is not a
that case he who is a r
as a matter of self-gov
do just what he ple
him. But if the ne
man, is it not to that
total destruction of sel
ment to say that he
not govern himself? V
white man governs
that is self-governme
when he governs him
also governs another r
is more than self-gover
that is despotism. If t
is a man, why then my
faith teaches me that i



Judge Douglas frequently, with bitter irony and sarcasm, paraphrases our argument by saying: "The white people of Nebraska are good enough to govern themselves, but they are not good enough to govern a few miserable negroes!"

Well! I doubt not that the people of Nebraska are and will continue to be as good as the average of people elsewhere. I do not say the contrary. What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet-anchor, of American republicanism.

VIII

MEANING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

From a speech delivered at Springfield, Illinois, June 26, 1857.


CHIEF JUSTICE TANEY, in his opinion in the Dred Scott case, admits that the language of the Declaration is broad enough to include the whole human family, but he and Mr. Douglas argue that the framers of that instrument did not intend to include negroes. The fact that they did not place their

at once, or ever afterward, actually place all white people on an equality with one another. And this is the staple argument of both the chief justice and the senator for doing this obvious violence to the plain, unmistakable language of the Declaration!

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include *all* men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal *in all respects*. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to

were about
ately upon them. They
had no power to confer
boon. They meant simply
declare the right, so that
enforcement of it might be as
fast as circumstances
permit.

They meant to set up
a standard maxim for free
which should be familiar
and revered by all ; and
looked to, constantly
for, and even though
perfectly attained, yet
approximated, and
constantly spreading
increasing its influence




practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain ; and it was placed in the Declaration not for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be—as, thank God, it is now proving itself—a stumbling-block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack.

"A HOUSE DIVIDED ITSELF CANNOT STAND"

From a speech delivered at
Springfield, Illinois, at the
Republican State Convention by
had been named as its candidate
States senator.

If we could first know
we are, and whither we
tending, we could better
what to do, and how to do it.
We are now far into the
year since a policy was
with the avowed object
confident promise of
end to slavery agitation.



will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.

I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

RESISTANCE TO THE SUPREME COURT

From a speech delivered at Chicago
Ill., July 10, 1858.

I HAVE expressed heretofore
and I now repeat, my opposition
to the Dred Scott decision;
but I should be allowed to state
the nature of that position, and I
ask your indulgence while I do so.

What is fairly implied by
the term Judge Douglas
used, "resistance to the decision"?
I do not resist the Dred



Judge Douglas speaks of, of interfering with property, would arise. But I am doing no such thing as that; all that I am doing is refusing to obey it as a political rule. If I were in Congress, and a vote should come up on a question whether slavery should be prohibited in a new Territory, in spite of the Dred Scott decision, I would vote that it should.

That is what I would do. Judge Douglas said last night that before the decision he might advance his opinion, and it might be contrary to the decision when it was made; but after it was made he would abide by it until it was reversed. Just so! We let this property abide by the decision, but we will try to reverse that decision. We will try to put it where Judge Douglas would

decide .

we mean to reverse
mean to do it peace

What are the uses
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two uses. As rules

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decide in this case

Scott is a slave.

resists that. Not

but they say to ev


that persons stan

Dred Scott stands

That is, they say

question comes


other person, it



the other way. That is one thing we mean to try to do.

The sacredness that Judge Douglas throws around this decision is a degree of sacredness that has never been before thrown around any other decision. I have never heard of such a thing. Why, decisions apparently contrary to that decision, or that good lawyers thought were contrary to that decision, have been made by that very court before. It is the first of its kind; it is an astonisher in legal history. It is a new wonder of the world. It is based upon falsehood in the main as to the facts—allegations of facts upon which it stands are not facts at all in many instances; and no decision made on any question—the first instance of a decision made under so many unfavorable circumstances — thus

But Judge Douglas w
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extraordinary decision,
under these extraordina
cumstances, and give th
in Congress in accordan
it, yield to it and obe
every possible sense. C
stances alter cases. Don
tlemen here remember th
of that same Supreme
some twenty-five or thirty
ago, deciding that a na
bank was constitutiona
ask if somebody does r
member that a national
was declared to be co




granted by Congress. That recharter was laid before General Jackson. It was urged upon him, when he denied the constitutionality of the bank, that the Supreme Court had decided that it was constitutional; and General Jackson then said that the Supreme Court had no right to lay down a rule to govern a coördinate branch of the government, the members of which had sworn to support the Constitution—that each member had sworn to support that Constitution as he understood it. I will venture here to say that I have heard Judge Douglas say that he approved of General Jackson for that act. What has now become of all his tirade against “resistance to the Supreme Court”?

REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE

From Lincoln's reply to Douglas
joint debate at Jonesboro, Illinois,
September 15, 1858.

THE judge has gone a long account of the Old and Democratic parties, connects itself with this against Trumbull and me.


He says that they are upon a compromise in to the slavery question in that in a national Democratic convention resolutions passed to abide by that



and regard as a finality the compromise of 1850. I understand the judge to be altogether right about that; I understand that part of the history of the country as stated by him to be correct. I recollect that I, as a member of that party, acquiesced in that compromise. I recollect in the Presidential election which followed, when we had General Scott up for the Presidency, Judge Douglas was around berating us Whigs as abolitionists, precisely as he does to-day—not a bit of difference. I have often heard him. We could do nothing when the Old Whig party was alive that was not abolitionism, but it has got an extremely good name since it has passed away.

When that compromise was made, it did not repeal the old Missouri Compromise. It left a region of United States ter-

.....
This compromise did not
peal that one. It did
affect or propose to repeal
But at last it became]
Douglas's duty, as he thought
(and I find no fault with
as chairman of the Committee
on Territories, to bring
bill for the organization
territorial government—first
one, then of two Territories
north of that line. When
did so it ended in his inserting
a provision substantially
repealing the Missouri Compromise
That was because the
promise of 1850 had



the agitation of the slavery question. We were making no fuss about it. All had acquiesced in the compromise measures of 1850. We never had been seriously disturbed by any abolition agitation before that period. When he came to form governments for the Territories north of the line of $36^{\circ} 30'$, why could he not have let that matter stand as it was standing? Was it necessary to the organization of a Territory? Not at all. Iowa lay north of the line, and had been organized as a Territory, and came into the Union as a State without disturbing that compromise. There was no sort of necessity for destroying it to organize these Territories.

But, gentlemen, it would take up all my time to meet all the little quibbling arguments of Judge Douglas to show that

position that that compromise was virtually repealed and that the compromise of 1850 show that they are the fallacies. I have the that Judge Douglas brought into Congress time of the introduction Nebraska Bill, which original form did not the Missouri Compromise he there expressly state he had forbore to do because it had not been done the compromise of 1850.

I close this part of the discussion on my part by :



XII

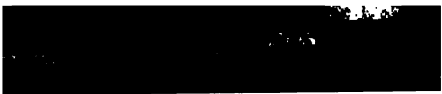
NOTES FOR SPEECHES

Written about October 1, 1858.

SUPPOSE it is true that the negro is inferior to the white in the gifts of nature; is it not the exact reverse of justice that the white should for that reason take from the negro any part of the little which he has had given him? "Give to him that is needy" is the Christian rule of charity; but "Take from him that is needy" is the rule of slavery.

The sum of pro-slavery theology seems to be this: "Slavery is not universally right, nor yet universally wrong; it is bet-

tending against the will of
but still there is some difficulty
in ascertaining and applying
to particular cases. For instance,
we will suppose Rev. Dr. Ross has a
slave named Sambo, and the ques-
tion is, "Is it the will of God
that Sambo shall remain a slave
or be set free?" The Lord
mighty gives no audible answer
to the question, and his silence,
the Bible, gives no answer,
at most none but such as amounts
to a squabble as to what it means;
no one thinks of consulting
Sambo's opinion on the subject.



his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God wills Sambo to continue a slave, he thereby retains his own comfortable position ; but if he decides that God wills Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his gloves, and delve for his own bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by the perfect impartiality which has ever been considered most favorable to correct decisions?

XIII

THE NEGRO INCLUDED IN DECLARATION OF IN DEPENDENCE

From Lincoln's reply to Douglas
Galesburg joint debate, October 7

THE judge has alluded to the
Declaration of Independence
and insisted that negro
not included in that Decla-
ration, and that it is a
mistake upon the framers of that
document to suppose that
negroes were meant therein;
He asks you: Is it possible



and yet held a portion of that race in slavery? Would he not at once have freed them?

I only have to remark upon this part of the judge's speech (and that, too, very briefly, for I shall not detain myself, or you, upon that point for any great length of time), that I believe the entire records of the world, from the date of the Declaration of Independence up to within three years ago, may be searched in vain for one single affirmation, from one single man, that the negro was not included in the Declaration of Independence. I think I may defy Judge Douglas to show that he ever said so, that Washington ever said so, that any President ever said so, that any member of Congress ever said so, or that any living man upon the whole earth ever said so, until the necessities of the

And I will remember
Douglas and this audience
while Mr. Jefferson was
owner of slaves, as undoubt-
edly he was, in speaking upon
this very subject, he used the
language that "he trembled
for his country when he re-
membered that God was just."
I will offer the highest praise
in my power to Judge Douglas
if he will show that he
in his life, ever uttered a sen-
tence at all akin to that of Jeffer-



XIV

THE DRED SCOTT DECISION

From Lincoln's reply to Douglas in the
Galesburg joint debate, October 7, 1858.

THE essence of the Dred Scott case is compressed into the sentence which I will now read :
“ Now, as we have already said in an earlier part of this opinion, upon a different point, the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.” I repeat it, “ the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution ” !
What is it to be “ affirmed ” in the Constitution ? Made firm in the Constitution—so made that it cannot be separated from the Constitution without

I have read, affirming that the Constitution is the supreme instrument of the land; that the justice of every State shall be bound by it, any law or constitution of any State to the contrary notwithstanding; that the property in a slave is recognized in that Constitution, is not formed into, and cannot be separated from it without breaking it—durable as the instrument, part of the instrument,—what follows as a result, and even syllogistic argument from it? I think it follows, and I submit to the country.



Nothing in the constitution or laws of any State can destroy a right distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution of the United States.


The right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution of the United States.

Therefore nothing in the constitution or laws of any State can destroy the right of property in a slave.

I believe that no fault can be pointed out in that argument ; assuming the truth of the premises, the conclusion, so far as I have capacity at all to understand it, follows inevitably. There is a fault in it, as I think, but the fault is not in the reasoning ; the falsehood, in fact, is a fault in the premises. I believe that the right of property in a slave is not distinctly and expressly affirmed in the

the Constitution where the
of property in a slave is
tinctly and expressly affirm

I say, therefore, that I tl
one of the premises is not
in fact. But it is true
Judge Douglas. It is true
the Supreme Court who
nounced it. They are estop
from denying it, and bein
topped from denying it, the
clusion follows that, the
stitution of the United S
being the supreme law, no
stitution or law can inte
with it. It being affirm
the decision that the rig




law or constitution can destroy that right. I then say to Judge Douglas, and to all others, that I think it will take a better answer than a sneer to show that those who have said that the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution are not prepared to show that no constitution or law can destroy that right. I say I believe it will take a far better argument than a mere sneer to show to the minds of intelligent men that whoever has so said is not prepared, whenever public sentiment is so far advanced as to justify it, to say the other.

THE WRONG OF SLA

From Lincoln's opening speech
bate with Douglas at Quincy,
tober 13, 1858.

WE have in this nation
ment of domestic slave
is a matter of absolute
that it is a disturbing
It is the opinion of all
men who have expressed
opinion upon it, that it is
gerous element. We have
a controversy in regard
That controversy springs
springs from difference of
ion, and if we can learn




the different systems of likely
that we would propose ns of
gard to that disturbing elegrad-

I suggest that the differ un-
of opinion, reduced to its lowe
est terms, is no other than itu-
difference between the mar-
who think slavery a wrong and
those who do not think and
wrong. The Republican pat it.
think it wrong—we think it il so
moral, a social, and a poli itself.
wrong. We think it is a w that
not confining itself mereresent
the persons or the States ve that
it exists, but that it is a ve any-
which in its tendency, to sence
the least, affects the exist. thing
of the whole nation. Bec: guar-
we think it wrong, we propo
a course of policy that shaott
deal with it as a wrong. 7

We deal with it as with any
other wrong, in so far as we
can prevent its growing any
larger, and so deal with it that

, and the same
rid of it in any satis
ay, and all the consti
bligations thrown abo
b. Suppose that in referen
its actual existence
W. on, and to our c
me al obligations, we
is a at all to disturb
that s where it exists,
It is ss that we have
men ation to disturb it
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gerer than that: we d
a c e to disturb it when
Th stance, we think the
s on would permit us.
the Constitution wou



pose the nation is very likely soon to agree to—the terms of making the emancipation gradual and compensating the unwilling owners. Where we suppose we have the constitutional right, we restrain ourselves in reference to the actual existence of the institution and the difficulties thrown about it. We also oppose it as an evil so far as it seeks to spread itself. We insist on the policy that shall restrict it to its present limits. We don't suppose that in doing this we violate anything due to the actual presence of the institution, or anything due to the constitutional guaranties thrown around it.

We oppose the Dred Scott decision in a certain way, upon which I ought perhaps to address you in a few words. We do not propose that when Dred Scott has been decided to

which way,
thousand, shall be decide
that court to be slaves, we
in any violent way disturb
rights of property thus sett
but we nevertheless do op
that decision as a political
which shall be binding on
voter to vote for nobody
thinks it wrong, which sh
binding on the membe
Congress or the Preside
favor no measure that do
actually concur with the
ciples of that decision. 'I
not propose to be bound
as a political rule in tha
because we think it la




selves. We propose so resisting it as to have it reversed if we can, and a new judicial rule established upon this subject.

I will add this, that if there be any man who does not believe that slavery is wrong in the three aspects which I have mentioned, or in any one of them, that man is misplaced and ought to leave us. While, on the other hand, if there be any man in the Republican party who is impatient over the necessity springing from its actual presence, and is impatient of the constitutional guaranties thrown around it, and would act in disregard of these, he too is misplaced, standing with us. He will find his place somewhere else ; for we have a due regard, so far as we are capable of understanding them, for all these things. This, gentlemen, as well as I can give it,

trary to me—a sentiment which holds that slavery is not wrong and therefore goes for the policy that does not propose dealing with it as a wrong. The policy is the Democratic policy, and that sentiment is the Democratic sentiment. There be a doubt in the mind of any one of this vast audience that this is really the central idea of the Democratic party, in relation to this subject, I ask him to bear witness while I state a few things, as I think, to prove the proposition.

It is a place the



policy, never himself says it is wrong. He has the high distinction, so far as I know, of never having said slavery is either right or wrong. Almost everybody else says one or the other, but the Judge never does. If there be a man in the Democratic party who thinks it is wrong, and yet clings to that party, I suggest to him in the first place that his leader don't talk as he does, for he never says that it is wrong.

In the second place, I suggest to him that if he will examine the policy proposed to be carried forward, he will find that he carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in it. If you will examine the arguments that are made on it, you will find that every one carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in slavery.

I wish him to examine
course in regard to the
a moment, and then
opinion will not be a
little. You say it is
but don't you constantly
to anybody else saying
you not constantly say
this is not the right place
pose it? You say it is
opposed in the free
cause slavery is not
must not be opposed in
States, because it is
must not be opposed
because that will make
it must not be opposed



to oppose this evil overspreading the continent, which you say yourself is coming. Frank Blair and Gratz Brown tried to get up a system of gradual emancipation in Missouri, had an election in August, and got beat; and you, Mr. Democrat, threw up your hat and hallooed, "Hurrah for Democracy!"


So I say again, that in regard to the arguments that are made, when Judge Douglas says he "don't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down," whether he means that as an individual expression of sentiment, or only as a sort of statement of his views on national policy, it is alike true to say that he can thus argue logically if he don't see anything wrong in it; but he cannot say so logically if he admits that slavery is wrong.

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differ-
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operty,





cratic policy, and in that policy itself, there is a careful, studied exclusion of the idea that there is anything wrong in slavery.

Let us understand this. I am not, just here, trying to prove that we are right and they are wrong. I have been stating where we and they stand, and trying to show what is the real difference between us; and I now say that whenever we can get the question distinctly stated,—can get all these men who believe that slavery is in some of these respects wrong, to stand and act with us in treating it as a wrong,—then, and not till then, I think, will we in some way come to an end of this slavery agitation.

XVI

THE PRINCIPLES OF JEFFERSON

From a letter to H. L. Pierce a
dated April 6, 1859.

I REMEMBER being once
amused at seeing two
intoxicated men engaged
fight with their greatcoats
which fight, after a long
rather harmless contest
in each having fought
out of his own coat a
that of the other. If
leading parties of this




But, soberly, it is now no child's play to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation. One would state with great confidence that he could convince any sane child that the simpler propositions of Euclid are true ; but nevertheless he would fail utterly with one who should deny the definitions and axioms.

The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashinglly calls them "glittering generalities." Another bluntly calls them "self-evident lies." And others insidiously argue that they apply to "superior races." These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect—the supplanting the principles

the people. They are the vanguard, the miners and sappers of returning despotism. They must repulse them, or they will subjugate us. This is a war of compensation; and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, cannot serve it not for themselves, and under a just God, cannot long retain it.

All honor to Jefferson—the man who, in the conciliatory pressure of a struggle for national independence by a free people, had the coolness, firmness,



times, and so to embalm it there that to-day and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the very harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression.

A LOOK INTO THE F

From a speech delivered at Cincinnati
September 17, 1859.

WE know that "you :
a feather," and that w
beat you all together
expect to do it. V
intend to be very i
about it. We mean
deliberate and calm a
it is possible to be, b
and resolved as it is
for men to be. Wh
as we say, beat you,
hans want to know



to do with you. We mean to treat you, as near as we possibly can, as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison treated you. We mean to leave you alone, and in no way to interfere with your institution; to abide by all and every compromise of the Constitution, and, in a word, coming back to the original proposition, to treat you, so far as degenerated men (if we have degenerated) may, according to the example of those noble fathers—Washington, Jefferson, and Madison. We mean to remember that you are as good as we; that there is no difference between us other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to recognize and bear in mind always that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as we claim to have, and treat you accordingly. We

once did have a chance
way.

I have told you
mean to do. I want
now, when that time
place, what do you
do? I often hear it
that you mean to
Union whenever a
or anything like it
President of the Un

[A voice: "That

"That is so," one of


I wonder if he is a

ian? [A voice:

Douglas man."]

Want to know what

going to do with a



alongside of us outrageous fellows? Or are you going to build up a wall some way between your country and ours, by which that movable property of yours can't come over here any more, to the danger of your losing it? Do you think you can better yourselves on that subject by leaving us here under no obligation whatever to return those specimens of your movable property that come hither?

You have divided the Union because we would not do right with you, as you think, upon that subject; when we cease to be under obligations to do anything for you, how much better off do you think you will be? Will you make war upon us and kill us all? Why, gentlemen, I think you are as gallant and as brave men as live; that you can fight as bravely in

occasions ; but man
you are not better th
and there are not so
you as there are of
will never make much
at whipping us. If
fewer in numbers th
think that you could
if we were equal it w
be a drawn battle ;
inferior in numbers
make nothing by att
master us.

XVIII

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

From a letter to J. W. Fell, dated December 20, 1859.

I WAS born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was

from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Ephraim, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He moved from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new



woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond "readin', writin', and cipherin'" to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, Macon County.

in a store.

Then came the Black War; and I was elected captain of volunteers, which gave me more than any I have had went the campaign, I ran for the legislature year (1832), and was the only time I ever
> beaten by the people next and three successive elections I was the legislature. I candidate afterwards this legislative period studied law, and r



both inclusive, practised law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics ; and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly ; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds ; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected.

XIX

AN APPEAL TO THE

From the address delivered
at the Institute, New York, February

AND now, if they will
—as I suppose they will
—I would address
to the Southern people


I would say to
consider yourselves
able and a just people
consider that in
qualities of reason
you are not inferior



murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now, can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no ex-

does, then, in case
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begin to get votes
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to be sectional.
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it? If you are, yo
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this very year. Yo
begin to discover,
plainly is, that you
not touch the issue
that we get no vo
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some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No! Then you really believe that the principle which "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" thought so clearly right

moment's consideration.

Some of you delight to in our faces the war against sectional parties by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight months before Washington gave that warning he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwest Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to the very moment he gave that warning: and about



connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free States.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his policy, or upon you, who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

But you say you are conservative,—eminently conservative,—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort.

What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and

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True, you disag
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Some of you are f
the foreign slave-t
for a congressional
for the Territories




through the judiciary ; some for the "gur-reat pur-rinciple " that "if one man would enslave another, no third man should object," fantastically called "popular sovereignty " ; but never a man among you is in favor of Federal prohibition of slavery in Federal Territories, according to the practice of "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within which our government originated.

Consider, then, whether your claim for conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was.

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to that old policy.
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You charge that
insurrections are
slaves. We deny i
is your proof? Har



ber of our party is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the


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government under which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong ; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism ; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection, twenty-eight years

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least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule; and the slave revolution in Haiti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The Gunpowder Plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural



much fears, or much in
such an event, will be
appointed.

In the language of
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of the slaveholding States only. The Federal Government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned

execution. 1811

Louis Napoleon
Brown's attempt
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feeling—that sentiment — by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire ; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot-box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound ; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written

and well-understood as
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of yours to take slaves
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say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between dictum and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said, it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement in the opinion that “the

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“slavery” is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word “property,” even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a “person”; and wherever his master’s legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as “service or labor which may be due”—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought

money
clusion based upon it

And then it is to be
bered that "our fathers
framed the government
which we live"—the
made the Constitution
cided this same con-
question in our favor
decided it without
among themselves
ing the decision; with-
sion among themselves
the meaning of it
made, and, so far
dence is left, without
upon any mistake
of facts.




be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it: but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

FAREWELL ADDRESS
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
FEBRUARY 11, 1861


My Friends : No one in
my situation can appreciate
feeling of sadness at this
leaving. To this place, and
kindness of these people,
everything. Here I have
a quarter of a century
have passed from a young
an old man. Here my children
have been born, and
buried. I now leave, not
knowing when or whether



Divine Being who ever attended him I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To his care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

FROM HIS REPLY
ADDRESS OF WEL
INDIANAPOLIS,
FEBRUARY 11,

IN all trying positio
I shall be placed, a
I shall be placed in
my reliance will b
and the people of
States; and I wis
member, now and
it is your busine
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people shall be !




States, and to their posterity in all coming time. It is your business to rise up and preserve the Union and liberty for yourselves, and not for me. I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind that not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you, is the question: Shall the Union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations?

ADDRESS IN INDEPENDENCE
HALL, PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 22, 1861

I AM filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live.

You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is placed the trust of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can only answer, sir, that all the power




and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all fu-

and that all should have
equal chance. This is
sentiment embodied in
Declaration of Independence

Now, my friends, can
country be saved on that
If it can, I will consider myself
one of the happiest men in the
world if I can help to save it
If it cannot be saved upon
principle, it will be truly
But if this country can
saved without giving up
principle, I was about to say
would rather be assassinated
this spot than surrender

Now, in my view
of the affair



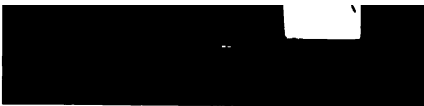
vance that there will be no bloodshed unless it is forced upon the government. The government will not use force unless force is used against it.

My friends, this is wholly an unprepared speech. I did not expect to be called on to say a word when I came here. I supposed I was merely to do something toward raising a flag. I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet. But I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.

FIRST INAUGURAL
MARCH 4, 1

*Fellow-citizens of
States :* In compliance
custom as old as
ment itself, I ap
you to address you
to take in your
oath prescribed by
tution of the Unit
be taken by the Pr
fore he enters on t
of his office."


I do not consi
sary at present fo



among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar

lawgiver is the law. All
bers of Congress swear
support to the whole Con-
tion—to this provision as
as to any other. To the
osition, then, that slaves
cases come within the ter-
this clause "shall be del-
up," their oaths are unan-
Now, if they would ma-
effort in good temper,
they not with nearly
unanimity frame and pas-
by means of which to
good that unanimous o-

There is some differ-
opinion whether this



to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should any one in any case be content that his oath shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizen of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States"?

I take the official oath to-

rules.

choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and great distinguished citizens have




generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it except by

BUT an association of men, by the nature of contract made, can it, as a contract, be probably undone by less than the parties who made it? Can a party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak—does it not require all to fully rescind it?

Descending from these general principles, we find the position that in legal contemplation the Union is perpetually confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association.




faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was "to form a more perfect Union."

But if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are


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American people, shall
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rect the contrary. I tru
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be no bloodshed or violence ;
and there shall be none, unless
it be forced upon the national
authority. The power con-
fided to me will be used to
hold, occupy, and possess the
property and places belonging
to the government, and to col-
lect the duties and imposts ; but
beyond what may be necessary
for these objects, there will be
no invasion, no using of force
against or among the people
anywhere. Where hostility to
the United States, in any in-
terior locality, shall be so great
and universal as to prevent
competent resident citizens
from holding the Federal
offices, there will be no attempt
to force obnoxious strangers
among the people for that ob-
ject. While the strict legal
right may exist in the govern-
ment to enforce the exercise
of these offices, the attempt to

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That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny ; but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

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guaranties and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by national or by State authority? The Constitution does not expressly say. *May* Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say.

From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide

cease. There is no other alternative ; for continuing the government is acquiescence on one side or the other.

If a minority in such a case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them ; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not a portion of a new confederacy secede a year or two hence arbitrarily, and then some other portion secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it?




Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that consti-


case, upon the parties
as to the object of
while they are also e
very high respect an
eration in all parallel
all other department
government. And w
obviously possible t
decision may be err
any given case, still
effect following it, bei
to that particular case
chance that it may be
and never become a
for other cases, can
borne than could the
different practice.
same time the cano



fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.


One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law

where the moral sense of
people imperfectly supports
law itself. The great body
the people abide by the
legal obligation in both
and a few break over in
This, I think, cannot be
fectly cured; and it would
worse in both cases after
separation of the section
before. The foreign
trade, now imperfectly
pressed, would be ultimately
revived, without restriction
one section, while for
slaves, now only partially
rendered, would not be
derided at all by the other



impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other ; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

ing government, they can exercise their constitutional right amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should under existing circumstances favor rather than oppose a



able, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection

ple, and they have
none upon him to fix
the separation of the
The people themselves
this also if they choose
executive, as such, he
to do with it. His
administer the present
ment, as it came to
and to transmit it,
by him, to his successor

Why should the
patient confidence
mate justice of the
there any better or
in the world? In
differences, is either



South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never

you as are now dissatisfied
have the old Constitution
impaired, and, on the same
point, the laws of your
framing under it ; while the
administration will have
immediate power, if it
to change either. If it
admitted that you who are
satisfied hold the right
the dispute, there still
single good reason for pre-
tate action. Intelligent
triotism, Christianity, and
reliance on Him who has
yet forsaken this favored
are still competent to ad-





of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

EELEY

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York
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now to
t, now
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erences
to be
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t them.
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to an
I have
right.





be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I

race, I do because I
helps to save the U
what I forbear, I f
cause I do not believ
help to save the U
shall do less whenev
believe what I am d
the cause, and I sha
whenever I shall be
more will help the
shall try to correct e
shown to be errors,
adopt new views so
shall appear to be t

I have here statu
pose according to r
official duty; and I



XXV

DEPENDENCE UPON GOD

Reply to an address by Mrs. Gurney,
September [28?], 1862.

I AM glad of this interview, and glad to know that I have your sympathy and prayers.

We are indeed going through a great trial—a fiery trial. In the very responsible position in which I happen to be placed, being a humble instrument in the hands of our heavenly Father, as I am, and as we all are, to work out his great purposes, I have desired that all my works and acts may be according to his will, and that it might be so, I have sought his aid; but if, after endeavoring

he wills it otherwise

If I had had my
war would never
commenced. If I
allowed my way, this
have been ended b
but we find it still
and we must belie
permits it for som
pose of his own, my
unknown to us; a
with our limited
ings we may not
comprehend it, ye
but believe that h
the world still gov



XXVI

MEDITATION ON THE DIVINE WILL

September [30?], 1862.

THE will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time.

In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am

shall not end yet.
mere great power on th
of the now contesta
could have either sa
destroyed the Union
a human contest. Yet
test began. And, hav
gun, he could give tl
victory to either side a
Yet the contest procee



XXVII

LETTER TO GENERAL McCLELLAN

October 13, 1862.

My dear Sir: You remember my speaking to you of what I called your over-cautiousness. Are you not over-cautious when you assume that you cannot do what the enemy is constantly doing? Should you not claim to be at least his equal in prowess, and act upon the claim?

As I understand, you telegraphed General Halleck that you cannot subsist your army at Winchester unless the railroad from Harper's Ferry to that point be put in working

twice as great from the
transportation as you
have to do without the r
last named. He now v
from Culpeper Court
which is just about tw
far as you would have
from Harper's Ferry.
certainly not more tha
as well provided with v
as you are.

I certainly should be p
for you to have the adv
of the railroad from H
Ferry to Winchester,
wastes all the remain
autumn to give it to yo
in fact ignores the quest



communications as much as possible without exposing your own." You seem to act as if this applies against you, but cannot apply in your favor. Change positions with the enemy, and think you not he would break your communication with Richmond within the next twenty-four hours?

You dread his going into Pennsylvania; but if he does so in full force, he gives up his communications to you absolutely, and you have nothing to do but to follow and ruin him. If he does so with less than full force, fall upon and beat what is left behind all the easier. Exclusive of the water-line, you are now nearer Richmond than the enemy is by the route that you can and he must take. Why can you not reach there before him, unless you admit that he is more than your

are as good on yours as on
You know I desired, but did
order, you to cross the Potomac
below, instead of above,
Shenandoah and Blue Ridge.
My idea was that this would
once menace the enemy's com-
munications, which I would
seize if he would permit.

If he should move north-
ward, I would follow him
closely, holding his communi-
cations. If he should prevent
our seizing his communications
and move toward Richmond,
I would press closely to
fight him if a favorable op-
portunity should present an-



neither north nor south, I would fight him there, on the idea that if we cannot beat him when he bears the wastage of coming to us, we never can when we bear the wastage of going to him.

This proposition is a simple truth, and is too important to be lost sight of for a moment. In coming to us he tenders us an advantage which we should not waive. We should not so operate as to merely drive him away. As we must beat him somewhere or fail finally, we can do it, if at all, easier near to us than far away. If we cannot beat the enemy where he now is, we never can, he again being within the intrenchments of Richmond.

Recurring to the idea of going to Richmond on the inside track, the facility of supplying from the side away from the enemy is remarkable, as it

you move directly
or on the inside arc,
the Blue Ridge more
The chord-line, as you
ries you by Aldie, Hay
and Fredericksburg; a
see how turnpikes, r
and finally the Poto
Aquia Creek, meet yo
points from Washing
same, only the lines le
a little, if you press
the Blue Ridge part of

The gaps through
Ridge I understand to
the following distan
Harper's Ferry, to
tells of miles: Grego



abling him to make an important move without your knowledge, and compelling him to keep his forces together for dread of you. The gaps would enable you to attack if you should wish. For a great part of the way you would be practically between the enemy and both Washington and Richmond, enabling us to spare you the greatest number of troops from here. When at length running for Richmond ahead of him enables him to move this way, if he does so, turn and attack him in rear. But I think he should be engaged long before such point is reached. It is all easy if our troops march as well as the enemy, and it is unmanly to say they cannot do it. This letter is in no sense an order.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

XXVII

TELEGRAM TO
McCLELLAN

October 24 [25?]

I HAVE just read you
about sore-tongued
tired horses. V
don't me for asking
horses of your army
since the battle
that fatigues any

A



XXIX

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

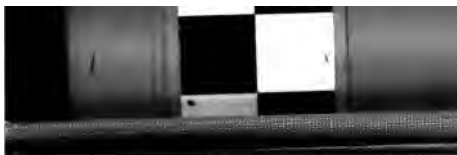
January 1, 1863.

WHEREAS, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a

free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will seize and maintain the liberty of such persons, and will use all the power and authority in its act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, and will make such efforts they may make to secure actual freedom.

“That the Executive Government, on the first day of January, 1863, said, by proclamation, declare the States and Territories, if any, in which people thereof respectively then be in rebellion aga



by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall in the absence of strong countervailing testimony be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in

days from ...
mentioned, order a
nate as the States
of States wherein t
thereof, respectively
day in rebellion a
United States, the
to wit:

Arkansas, Texas
(except the paris
Bernard, Plaquem
son, St. John, St.
James, Ascension,
Terrebonne, La
Mary, St. Martin,
including the city
leans), Mississip
Florida Georgia



ampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

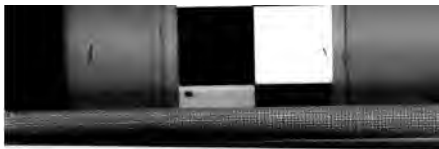
And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when

of suitable condition
received into the arme
of the United States to
forts, positions, stati
other places, and to
sels of all sorts in said

And upon this act,
believed to be an act c
warranted by the Co
upon military necess
voke the considerate
of mankind and the
favor of Almighty Go

In witness whereo
hereunto set my h
caused the seal of th
States to be affixed.



and sixty-three, and of
the independence of the
United States of Amer-
ica the eighty-seventh.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,
Secretary of State.

XXX

LETTER TO THE W
OF MANCHESTER

January 19,

*To the Working-
chester:* I have
acknowledge the
address and res
you sent me on
new year.

When I can
March, 1861, t'
constitutional



to maintain and preserve at once the Constitution and the integrity of the Federal Republic. A conscientious purpose to perform this duty is the key to all the measures of administration which have been and to all which will hereafter be pursued. Under our frame of government and my official oath, I could not depart from this purpose if I would. It is not always in the power of governments to enlarge or restrict the scope of moral results which follow the policies that they may deem it necessary for the public safety from time to time to adopt.

I have understood well that the duty of self-preservation rests solely with the American people ; but I have at the same time been aware that favor or disfavor of foreign nations might have a material in-

—o—o—
A fair examination of
has served to authorize
that the past actions and
policies of the United States
generally regarded as
been beneficial toward
kind. I have, therefore
relied upon the forbearance
of nations. Circumstances
some of which you know
include—induce me to expect
that if justice and
faith should be practiced
by the United States, they will
counteract no hostile influence
on the part of Great Britain
is now a pleasant duty




Queen, who is respected and esteemed in your own country only more than she is by the kindred nation which has its home on this side of the Atlantic.

I know and deeply deplore the sufferings which the working-men at Manchester, and in all Europe, are called to endure in this crisis. It has been often and studiously represented that the attempt to overthrow this government, which was built upon the foundation of human rights, and to substitute for it one which should rest exclusively on the basis of human slavery, was likely to obtain the favor of Europe. Through the action of our disloyal citizens, the working-men of Europe have been subjected to severe trials, for the purpose of forcing their sanction to that attempt. Under the cir-

stance of sublime
heroism which has not
surpassed in any age or in
country.

It is indeed an energetic
reinspiring assurance of
inherent power of truth,
of the ultimate and univ
triumph of justice, huma
and freedom. I do not c
that the sentiments you
expressed will be sustaine
your great nation ; and, o
other hand, I have no h
tion in assuring you that
will excite admiration, es
and the most reciprocal
ings of friendship amon



country or my own, the peace
and friendship which now exist
between the two nations will
be, as it shall be my desire to
make them, perpetual.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

XXXI

LETTER TO GEN
HOOKER

January 26, 18

General: I have p
the head of the
Potomac. Of co
done this upon w
me to be sufficien
yet I think it b
know that there
in regard to wh
quite satisfied
I believe yo



valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer.

I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the

I much fear that the
which you have aided to
into the army, of crit
their commander and
holding confidence from
will now turn upon y
shall assist you as far as
to put it down. Neith
nor Napoleon, if he wer
again, could get any go
of an army while such
prevails in it.

And now beware of ra
Beware of rashness, b
energy and sleepless vi
go forward and give
tories. Yours very tru

A. T. J. N.




XXXII

LETTER TO GENERAL GRANT

July 13, 1863.

My dear General : I do not remember that you and I ever met personally. I write this now as a grateful acknowledgment for the almost inestimable service you have done the country. I wish to say a word further. When you first reached the vicinity of Vicksburg, I thought you should do what you finally did—march the troops across the neck, run the batteries with the transports, and thus go below ; and I never had any faith, except a general hope that you knew better than I, that the Yazoo



below and to
Grand Gulf, and v
thought you should
the river and join
Banks, and when
northward, east o
Black, I feared it
take. I now wish
personal acknowle
you were right
wrong. Yours v
A



XXXIII

LETTER TO J. C. CONKLING

August 26, 1863.

My dear Sir: Your letter inviting me to attend a mass-meeting of unconditional Union men, to be held at the capital of Illinois on the third day of September, has been received. It would be very agreeable to me to thus meet my old friends at my own home, but I cannot just now be absent from here so long as a visit there would require.

The meeting is to be of all those who maintain unconditional devotion to the Union; and I am sure my old political friends will thank me for ten-

make false to the nation.

There are those who
dissatisfied with me. To
I would say : You desire
and you blame me that I
not have it. But how can
attain it? There are but
conceivable ways : First
suppress the rebellion by
of arms. This I am trying
do. Are you for it? I
am, so far we are agreed
you are not for it, a second
is to give up the Union.
against this. Are you for
If you are, you should say
plainly. If you are not



Union is now possible. All I learn leads to a directly opposite belief. The strength of the rebellion is its military, its army. That army dominates all the country and all the people within its range. Any offer of terms made by any man or men within that range, in opposition to that army, is simply nothing for the present, because such man or men have no power whatever to enforce their side of a compromise, if one were made with them.

To illustrate: Suppose refugees from the South and peace men of the North get together in convention, and frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union. In what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's army out of Pennsyl-

army will not
affect that army. In an e
at such compromise we sh
waste time which the en
would improve to our di
vantage; and that would
all. A compromise, to
effective, must be made e
with those who control
rebel army, or with the pe
first liberated from the dor
tion of that army by the su
of our own army. Now,
me to assure you that no
or intimation from that
army, or from any of th
controlling it, in relation
peace compromise, has
come to my knowledge
lief. All charges and in



I promise you that if any such proposition shall hereafter come, it shall not be rejected and kept a secret from you. I freely acknowledge myself the servant of the people, according to the bond of service,—the United States Constitution,—and that, as such, I am responsible to them.

But to be plain. You are dissatisfied with me about the negro. Quite likely there is a difference of opinion between you and myself upon that subject. I certainly wish that all men could be free, while I suppose you do not. Yet I have neither adopted nor proposed any measure which is not consistent with even your view, provided you are for the Union. I suggested compensated emancipation, to which you replied you wished not to be taxed to buy negroes. But

clusively by other means

You dislike the emancipation proclamation, and people would have it retracted. I say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the power of war in time of war. The most that can be said—much—is that slaves are property. Is there—has there been—any question that the law of war property, both enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever the Army helps us, or hurts the enemy? Armies, the world over, de

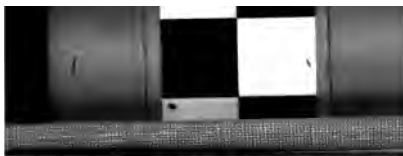


the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel. Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes and non-combatants, male and female.

But the proclamation, as law, either is valid or is not valid. If it is not valid, it needs no retraction. If it is valid, it cannot be retracted any more than the dead can be brought to life. Some of you profess to think its retraction would operate favorably for the Union. Why better after the retraction than before the issue? There was more than a year and a half of trial to suppress the rebellion before the proclamation issued ; the last one hundred days of which passed under an explicit notice that it was coming, un-

since the issue of
information as before.

I know, as fully as one
know the opinions of others
that some of the commanders
of our armies in the field,
have given us our most
important successes, believe
in emancipation policy and
use of the colored troops
inflicted the heaviest blow
dealt to the rebellion, and
at least one of these important
successes could not have
been achieved when it was not
for the aid of black soldiers.
Among the commanders
these views are some



purely as military opinions. I submit these opinions as being entitled to some weight against the objections often urged that emancipation and arming the blacks are unwise as military measures, and were not adopted as such in good faith.

You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you; but no matter. Fight you, then, exclusively, to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes.

I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that ex-

so much less for white sold
to do in saving the Uni
Does it appear otherwise
you? But negroes, like ot
people, act upon moti
Why should they do anyth
for us if we will do nothing
them? If they stake t
lives for us they must
prompted by the stron
motive, even the promise
freedom. And the pron
being made, must be kept.

The signs look better.
Father of Waters again ;
unvexed to the sea. Thi
to the great Northwest fo



their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a hand. On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one, and let none be banned who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's web-feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been and

ture—thanks to him.

Peace does not appear distant as it did. I hope will come soon, and come stay; and so come as to worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have proved that among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the sword, and that they who take to arms are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. Then there will be some brave men who can remember with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and raised bayonet, they



malignant heart and deceitful speech they strove to hinder it.

Still, let us not be over-sanguine of a speedy final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in his own good time, will give us the rightful result.

Yours very truly,
A. LINCOLN.

XXXIV

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

November 19, 1863.

FOURSCORE and seven
ago our fathers brought
on this continent a new
conceived in liberty, and
cated to the proposition
all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged
great civil war, testing
that nation, or any
conceived and so
endure.



altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that

of the people, by the peo
the people, shall not peri
the earth.



XXXV

RESPONSE TO A SERENADE

November 10, 1864. .

It has long been a grave question whether any government, not too strong for the liberties of its people, can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies. On this point the present rebellion brought our republic to a severe test, and a Presidential election occurring in regular course during the rebellion added not a little to the strain.

If the loyal people united were put to the utmost of their strength by the rebellion, must they not fail when divided and partially paralyzed by a political war among themselves?

us to forego or postpone
national election, it might
claim to have already
conquered and ruined us
by the strife of the election.
Human nature practically
applied to the facts of the
trial. What has occurred in the
past must ever recur in similar
circumstances. Human nature will not
change. In any future great
trial, compared with the
present, of this, we shall have
just as much, and as strong, as silly,
and as wise, as bad and as good.
us, therefore, study
the facts of this as philo-
sophers study the facts of
human nature, and learn from them.



strife, has done good too. It has demonstrated that a people's government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. Until now it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows, also, how sound and how strong we still are. It shows that, even among candidates of the same party, he who is most devoted to the Union and most opposed to treason can receive most of the people's votes. It shows, also, to the extent yet known, that we have more men now than we had when the war began. Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold.

But the rebellion continues, and now that the election is over, may not all having a common interest reunite in a common effort to save our

as I have been here in
willingly planted a thorn
man's bosom. While
deeply sensible to the
compliment of a reëlecti
duly grateful, as I trust
mighty God for hav
rected my countryme
right conclusion, as I th
their own good, it a
thing to my satisfacti
any other man may b
pointed or pained by th

May I ask those w
not differed with me
with me in this same
ward those who have
now let me close by
three hearty cheers
your soldiers and



XXXVI

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO MRS. BIXBY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

November 21, 1864.

Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may

your bereavement, and
you only the cherished
of the loved and lost, a
solemn pride that m
yours to have laid so c
sacrifice upon the altar
dom.

Yours very sincerely
and respectfully,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN



XXXVII


SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

March 4, 1865.

Fellow-countrymen : At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new

myself, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, our thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. I deprecated war



war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

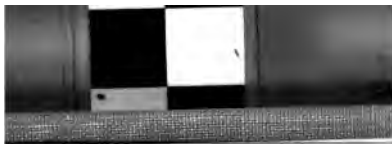
One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict

fundamental

Both read the same Bible,
pray to the same God ; and
invokes his aid against
other. It may seem strange
that any men should dare
ask a just God's assistance
wringing their bread from
sweat of other men's faces
let us judge not, that we be
judged. The prayers of
could not be answered-
of neither has been answered
fully.

The Almighty has his
purposes. "Woe unto
world because of offenses
it must needs be that come
come ; but woe to that man
whom the offense cometh



rich, in the providence of
God, must needs come, but
rich, having continued
through his appointed time, he
now wills to remove, and that
gives to both North and
South this terrible war, as the
is due to those by whom the
penalty came, shall we discern
herein any departure from
those divine attributes which
the believers in a living God
always ascribe to him? Fondly
we hope—fervently do we
pray—that this mighty scourge
war may speedily pass away.
Yet, if God wills that it con-
tinue until all the wealth piled
by the bondman's two hundred
and fifty years of unrequited
toil shall be sunk, and until
every drop of blood drawn with
the lash shall be paid by an-
other drawn with the sword, as
was said three thousand years
ago, so still it must be said,

with charity for all,
ness in the right, as God g
us to see the right, let us st
on to finish the work we
in; to bind up the nati
wounds; to care for him
shall have borne the battle,
for his widow, and his orp
—to do all which may ach
and cherish a just and las
peace among ourselves,
with all nations.







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